

An Essay

on

Gonorrhoea Venerea

Respectfully submitted to the Faculty of the

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- by -

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1.
Urethritis venerea.

Syn. Gonorrhoea, Blennorrhoea, Clap.

This common and very popular disease has been known far back in ancient times. Certainly, according to Mr. Beckett, in the year 1162, under the terms brunning or burning, and he mentions the fact of certain enactments being on record which provided that any Stewholder keeping a female with the perilous infirmity of burning should forfeit the sum of one hundred shillings.

Further, he says, that John Arden, Surgeon to Richard II. (1380), defines the brunning to be an inward heat and excoriation of the urethra.

In this country the disease is popularly termed a clap, from the old French word Clapises, which were public shops, kept and inhabited by prostitutes, and generally confined to a particular quarter of the town.

As is even now the case in several of the large towns of Italy.

In Germany the disorder is termed a Tripper from dripping; and in French a chan-de-pipe, from the heat and scalding in passing the urine.

Definition. *Urethritis venerea* signifies an inflammation of, and discharge from, the urethra of the male, or the external organs of generation in the female, produced by contagion from a similar disease.

Symptoms. These may be divided into three stages:— 1st, The incubation stage, or period of irritation; 2nd, The acute inflammatory; and 3rd, The chronic stage, or Gleet.

In the first-stage, or that of irritation, which usually comes on from the second to the ninth day after an impure connection, the patient merely notices a voluptuous

itching at the orifice of the urethra, and perhaps a general irritation of the penis.

The lips of the urethra are somewhat red and swollen, its orifice gaping, and on squeezing it, a slight serous, or thin whitish discharge exudes.

This state of affairs will as a general thing be first noticed upon urinating, and will last from twelve, to twenty four hours, terminating in the second, or Acute inflammatory stage. The discharge becomes thick and purulent, and when the disease is at its height is greenish or tinged with blood.

The penis swells, the glans becomes of a peculiar cherry color, is very tender, and often excoriated.

In consequence of the swollen state of the urethra the stream of urine is small and

forked, and passed with much straining, severe pain, and scalding.

All the parts in the vicinity of the genitals, the groins, thighs, perineum, and testicles, ache and feel tender; the patient's nightly rest is disturbed by long continued and painful erections, termed Chordee, which consists of a highly painful and crooked state of the penis, which is usually curved downward, and is caused by the fact that the violence of the inflammation in the urethra is to such an extent as not to allow of the same expansion as permitted by the Corpora cavernosa during an erection.

During the whole of this period there is generally a good deal of constitutional disturbance, restlessness, and fever.

In the words of an old Author;

"^{or} When these symptoms dance attendance

to the Catastrophe, the Clap, may be said to flourish in its full bloom, and the patient finds himself fairly seated on the stool of Repentance."

After some two or three weeks, if the patient has not abused himself by a wrong diet; the acute inflammatory symptoms and chordee abate, the heat of the urine is diminished, as also the pain, and nothing now remains but a thin mucopurulent discharge, termed the Fleet, or Chronic Stage.

Varieties. Urethritis venerea varies considerably in its severity: it is always more severe in first Claps, and in young persons of an irritable or scrofulous constitution.

But in old stages the urethra becomes insured, as it were, to the disease, and each subsequent infection is attended by fewer acute

Symptoms.

Gonorrhoea sicca, or Dry Clap as it is popularly termed, is occasionally met with in the male, and quite frequently in the female, in which the mucous membrane is red, swollen, and tender, but free from discharge.

In the male (affected with this form), there is severe scalding and pain in or during the period of micturition.

Causes. Uthritis venerea, is, as we have seen, an inflammation of and purulent discharge from the urethra, and is produced from a similar disease by contact.

But an inflammation of and discharge from the urethra may result from many other causes.

A case is mentioned by a very eminent author, in which a discharge resembling that of Clap was brought on by galloping several miles on a horse without a saddle,

Immoderate and protracted sexual indulgence; the introduction of bougies; blows on the perineum; violent bending of the penis during an erection; and long protracted travel over a rough road in a jolting vehicle; are well authenticated causes of discharges similar to that of Clap.

Inflammation of the urethra with discharge may be produced by various disordered conditions of the Constitution, it is frequently mentioned as a symptom of Rheumatism, and not unfrequently it precedes an attack of Gout.

Discharges are also produced by the use of certain kinds of medicines, as Caps. an. Cann. sat. Copaiba, and others.

The Menstrual fluid, is said to be capable of causing Urethritis with violent scalding, and Chordee, followed by swelled testicle.

Similar consequences sometimes ensue if the female be affected with Leucorrhoea, or any other discharge of any sort-what-ever.

Discharges from any of the above causes are styled, Urethritis, Gonorrhoea pura, &c.

Diagnosis. It is of considerable importance to have some well marked, and certain diagnostic sign between the two forms of the disease, but unfortunately no such sign exists.

Mr Bacot says, "If a discharge come on only a few hours after connection, and if it have continued several days without inflammatory symptoms; if the patient has been subject to some discharges after any excess in wine or venery; in all probability the patient labors under some other diseased condition of the urethra, and that although the intercourse of the sexes may

have been the exciting cause, still there may be no imputation on the cleanliness of the female."

The comparative mildness of the Urethritis, and the absence of acute inflammation, are points which if carefully noted will be of vast service in making up a correct diagnosis.

It is very important to observe, that although discharges may arise from many other causes besides impure connection, and although some discharges may arise from connection with chaste women, yet that every one of them is capable of exciting a similar discharge in a healthy person.

The physician is frequently asked, as to the danger of communicating the infection when the discharge is very slight, or merely mucous and gleet?

The patient should be informed, that the more violent the disease the greater is the danger of communicating it; but that, however slight the discharge may be, there is still some risk.

It is advisable, however, if the patient be determined to risk it, he should first cleanse the urethra by making water, and the injection of some mild astringent lotion.

The disease cannot be communicated before the discharge makes its appearance.

The disease generally makes its appearance after contagion, from the second to the ninth day; and the sooner it appears the more violent it generally is.

Urethritis venerea, in the female, is very rarely attended by the painful symptoms

that accompany the disease in men.

In many instances there is so little pain and uneasiness experienced by the female from the malady, that it is regarded as simple Flour albus.

The inflammation in these cases is very rarely, if ever extended to the urethra.

Swedman, asserts, "that he has never seen a woman in whom the disease was seated in the urethra".

The orifice of the urethra, however, is generally more or less irritated, and in some instances it becomes so sensible, as to occasion very severe burning pain in making water.

The seat of the disease is usually either in the vagina, clitoris, around the orifice of the urethra, or on the labia.

Women affected with the clap generally

experience a disagreeable itching, and titillation about the orifice of the vagina, and at the nape.

In severe cases the labia, nymphæ, and clitoris become swollen and exceedingly tender; there is generally a severe burning and stinging pain felt on passing the urine, and in walking.

In violent cases there is a constant aching pain experienced in the bladder, womb, groin, and back; the upper part of the thighs often become inflamed and excoriated, or covered with an aphthous eruption, from the irritation occasioned by the discharge.

Diagnosis. Acute inflammation of the mucous membrane of the labia, nymphæ, and vagina is not uncommon as a consequence of teething, or of costiveness, worms, and other disorders of the alimentary canal;

and it has precisely the same symptoms as Clap.

Leucorrhoea, or Fluxus Albus, may in general be distinguished from Clap by the absence of heat and pain in passing urine; and by the pain in the back, pallid countenance, irregular menstruation, and signs of debility which accompany it.

Yet a severe case of Clap may, and will cause the same set of symptoms.

As all discharges however produced, may be contagious, it becomes the Physician to be very reserved in his diagnosis, before he casts any reflections on the chastity of the female.

Prophylactic Treatment. Immediately after a suspicious connection, it will be advisable to pass the urine, so as to cleanse the urethra, and then thoroughly to wash the glans and penis in soap and water.

Curative Treatment. Urethritis appears to have a natural tendency, if left to itself, to terminate spontaneously.

At first, the matter is thin, and imparts a greenish stain to the linen; but as the inflammation subsides, the discharge becomes thicker, cream-like, and less abundant; and if the general habit is not irritable, and the patient avoids the influence of stimulating causes, the secretion gradually diminishes, until, in the course of six or eight weeks, it ceases entirely.

There are very few individuals, however, who are willing to delay the use of the Remedial Measures, or who are sufficiently prudent to abstain from stimulants; and other causes calculated to keep up a phlogistic habit of system to obtain such a desirable result, and in most in-

stances, either from injudicious attempts to arrest the discharge, or from other causes. Favored by a stimulating diet, the disease, if not controlled by appropriate treatment, degenerates into the third stage or gleet.

Urethritis Venerea is now looked upon as a purely local disease, confined in the first stages to a small portion of the Urethra, generally just back of the glans penis, in the fossa navicularis; but from injudicious treatment, diet, and other causes it often extends higher up, involving the bulbous portion, the prostate gland, and neck of bladder.

It is a question of considerable doubt whether we have any internal specifics for this disease; tis true some cases have been cured by the so called specifics, but

my experience does not allow me to trust entirely to their reputed virtues.

The plan of treatment which I have adopted, and have used successfully in several doz. cases, is as follows: if the patient should make application before the acute or second stage has set in, or when the following symptoms are manifest, viz: a slight tickling or agreeable itching is felt at the orifice of the urethra, with a slight redness and swelling of the same, and on pressure or of itself, a slight discharge of mucus or limpid matter takes place; up to the period when the acute stage sets in; then an injection composed of 2 grs. Zinc chloride to one oz. of pure water, to be thrown up the urethra some four or five times a day by means of a small glass syringe, the injection

being retained several minutes by means of pressure exerted on the lips of the urethra, will in a majority of cases, succeed in eradicating the disease in the course of a few days, and save the patient from a vast amount of pain.

In the second or Acute inflammatory stage I would not advise any astringent injections, as I believe they always cause an aggravation of the complaint, and are a pregnant source of the various Complications mentioned by many authors.

Acoritum. will be found to be the most suitable internal remedy in this stage, the inflammatory symptoms being well developed: burning pains during micturition; shooting stitches in the urethra when walking; constant urgings: the urine is passed drop by drop, with much straining:

The penis is swollen and inflamed; frequent and painful erections, and many others.

The above set of symptoms may arise from a sudden suppression of the discharge, if so the remedy is abundantly indicated.

Cannabis sat. is a remedy of eminent service in this complaint, the provings have elicited very many of the marked symptoms: such as, profuse discharge of yellow or greenish pus; difficulty of urinating with constant stinging; spasmodic erections, especially at night; the stream of urine is forked, or scatter like a fan.

The glands may be sore, swollen and inflamed.

Cantharis, is indispensable; is indicated when the neck of the bladder is implicated.

Constant and violent urgings to urinate, with ischuria; or scanty emission of a hot and burning urine, discharged drop by drop, with dysuria; hematuria; violent erections amounting to chordee.

Kali nit. is of service when frequent urgings to urinate; discharges of thick greenish matter; and some burning in the urethra during or after micturition.

Copaiba is indicated when there is a discharge of a yellow purulent matter, with burning in the urethra; tendency to Chordee; hematuria; constant and distressing urging to urinate; swelling and dilatation of the orifice of the urethra, with throbbing pain in the penis.

Capricum an. may be given when there is hot and burning urine with discharge of thick gonorrheal matter.

Mercurius Sol. is indicated when there is constant urging to urinate day and night; burning and smarting urine, emitted drop by drop; swelling of the urethra; the stream of urine is thin and twisted; inflammation of the orifice, with discharge of a greenish matter.

Pulsatilla, may be of service, when in conjunction with a scrofulous taint of the system, there is, frequent and ineffectual urging to urinate; perhaps Hæmaturia; a thin stream of urine, as if stricture existed; a whitish and slimy discharge from the urethra, with burning after micturition.

Oleum Terebinthinae, is useful when extreme difficulty of passing the urine, which is emitted drop by drop; the urine is red, bloody, and scanty; inflammation of the urethra, with painful erections, amounting to chordee; burning in the urethra.

If by some unfortunate mishap there should be a Metastasis of the urethral inflammation to the Testicles, giving rise to Orchitis, then some other Remedies will be called for, prominent among which is Bell, when hardness and lancinating pains

in one or both testicles.

Puls. may be useful when the right-testicle is drawn up and swollen; the spermatic cord is also swollen; with tension pain, and the left-testicle hanging down.

Clematis erecta, is a remedy advised by all authors for this distressing malady; recommended by Hahnemann for hardness and swelling of a testicle, if the affection result from a suppressed gonorrhoea.

Copaiba, Acru, Kali hydriod., Aurum met. will also be of service.

In regard to the treatment of the third stage or gleet; many internal remedies are recommended, such as, Acidum Nitricum; the various preparations of Mercurius (of which I consider the Mere. corr. is the best), the different preparations of Kalium; Sepia, Sulphur, and others.

My plan of treatment is to give the patient: first, an injection of Cupri sulphatis gr. v. to one oz. of pure water, to be used four times a day, ~~for~~ ^{four} days, (always urinating before injecting), then substitute an injection of Zinci sulphatis gr. v. to one oz. of water, to be used in same manner for three or four days more.

If after the week has elapsed, the discharge subsided, then continue the injection twice a day for three or four days longer and all will be well: but if the discharge shall not have been checked then give an injection of Zinci chloridi, grs. iiii. to the oz. of water to be used in same manner.

Throughout the whole course of the Complaint, a simple diet should be enforced, and the patient should strenuously avoid all stimulants, and be as quiet as possible.